

SOLAR ROOF STUDY COMMITTEE

April 24, 2013

MINUTES

Present: Betsy DeWitt, George Cha, Tommy Vitolo, Carla Benka, Sergio Modigliani, David Pollak, Jon Cody Haines
Staff: Melissa Goff, Lara Curtis Hayes, Dan Bennett

The committee began with introductions and then Melissa Goff described the Town's current municipal solar initiative. The Town is participating in the Metropolitan Area Planning Council's (MAPC's) regional procurement of SEMS (Solar Energy Management Services) along with 17 municipalities in the MAPC region. A SEMS is a financial arrangement in which a third-party solar developer owns, operates, and maintains the photovoltaic (PV) system, and we agree to site the system on our roof and purchase the system's electric output from the solar services provider for a predetermined period. The following sites have been identified as currently having the potential for solar development: Singletree Hill, Town Hall, the High School, the Evelyn Kिरrane Pool, Baker School and the Main Library. The selected developer (Broadway Renewable Strategies LLC) is in the process of evaluating our sites and we should be hearing back from them shortly on the results of their initial assessment.

Lara Curtis Hayes described the SolarizeMass program that Brookline was selected to participate in. Sergio Modigliani noted that any solar project on the five thoroughfares requires the approval of a Design Review Committee. He is also interested in any educational components that may come with these systems. There are permit and zoning implications for the sites under review.

Tommy Vitolo explained that the current solar initiatives are not connected to the charge of the committee. As the author of the Town Meeting resolution that created this committee he explained that his intent was to make it easier to incorporate solar in the future to the extent that accommodations can be made with limited cost. It would be useful for a checklist that the Building Department could use when they are undertaking a project that would look at things like the placement of mechanicals that may be put in such a way as to allow for an array at a later date it may be more economically feasible. Betsy Dewitt said that the Runkle experience with mechanicals showed how limited the options may be when it comes to placement.

David Pollak asked about the current inventory of buildings and if they should be sorted in terms of likelihood/viability and that perhaps an architectural study is needed to determine dead load, wind load and capacity. Dan Bennett said that the Building Department conducted a roof repair study about five years ago, to determine a repair and replacement cycle that is incorporated into the CIP. Tommy said that the article was intended to have the Committee look at items that would have a minimal cost within and existing project. Sergio asked about the potential for the Committee to look at more than just solar. David Pollak talked about how the Green Technology committee explored this issue a number of years ago and that there could be the potential of scope creep if they

looked at other technologies. Jon Cody Haines said that the stretch code was an effective way of addressing the efficiency of buildings, and that perhaps the by-laws would be a better way of response. He asked if this was limited to solar panels only or if solar thermal was part of the charge. Tommy explained that the charge is limited to just solar panels. He kept it narrow because it is a technology that is easy to understand.

The committee discussed the potential timeline for their work, and what their end product might be. David said that he could see the committee presenting something that could be negotiated with the Building Commission on how to address solar panels in future projects. Sergio noted that there is no money in the CIP for solar. David said that it may be seen as an unfunded mandate to investigate and implement solar, but it is not an unusual request within the existing requirements of items that architects need to explore. The Committee discussed the NREL's roof ready guide which is posted on the Committee's web page. Members felt that this could be a good starting point for their work. The checklist could be modified with Brookline-specific conditions. The Committee agreed to review the checklist and come back with comments for the next meeting. The next meeting was set for 5/22 at 5PM.

The meeting adjourned at 6:15 PM.